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ABSTRACT

American and Canadian research is reviewed concerning the language needs of native primary students entering English schools from homes where a language other than English is spoken, and a study is reported that contrasted the language performance of children entering school from homes where only English is spoken and from homes where a language other than English is spoken. The Carrow Elicited Language Inventory test was administered to 60 kindergarten students. The raw score age equivalent for the students from English speaking homes was from five to six years while it was from two and one-half to three years of age for the students from native homes. Differences between the two groups for grammatical errors occurred primarily in the verb, pronoun, contraction, and conjunction categories. Implications of the results are discussed. The following four commercially available language development programs are evaluated in terms of their designs for language development: Developmental Syntax Program, Distar Language, Interactive Language Development, and Portage Guide to Early Education. An annotated bibliography is also included. (SW)

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Assessment of language needs of native primary school students entering English schools . . . with suggestions for programming to meet their needs.

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Report by

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This study is intended for use by classroom teachers as well as other school support personnel. Included is a survey of American and Canadian research relative to the language needs of native primary students entering English schools from homes where a language other than English is spoken. Following this summary of the background literature, the author presents research contrasting language performance of two groups of children entering school at the primary level, one group composed of native Canadian children from homes where a language other than English is spoken, the other group composed of children from homes where only English is spoken. The Carrow Elicited Language Inventory was the test utilized for the assessment and results are presented to illustrate both the areas of difference and similarity in their language ability as well as the degree of such differences, where they do exist. Implications are presented to help summarize the findings and four commercially available language development programs are evaluated in terms of their designs for language development.

The Problem

The purpose of this report is to present information on the English speaking abilities of native Canadian students entering primary schools where English is the only language spoken and to interpret these findings so that educators can take steps toward providing appropriate language instruction for these students.

It is usually assumed, when native students start school and experience difficulty with the program due to their lack of familiarity with English, that they will 'pick it up' by being around their classmates. Meanwhile, the learning experiences they are subject to, with their English speaking peers, are utilizing language appropriate to the average five year old, native English speaker. The result for native students without the average five year old's English language ability is a gradual falling behind not only in language but also in the learning activities being taught. Without any special intervention, a gap grows

between the native student and his English speaking peer, both in language and achievement.

Background

Havinghurst (1970), in his study of education of native students in the United States, points out that there are no reasons to suppose that native children are basically or genetically less or more intelligent than other children.

Gonzales and Ortiz (1977), in studying Mexican American students in the United States, found language emerged as the prime reason for school failure of non-English speaking students. They go on to criticize current educational practices that insist all students function in one set of language skills when there is nothing done to accomodate students with inadequate English skills. Bangs (1968) provides a ready rationale for early identification and remediation of language development by citing the facts that academic success relies upon the ability to use oral symbolization adequately and that the student who progresses unassisted until

a relatively late stage in school is in severe difficulty. This 'background of failure' and frustration compounds an already large problem of deficit language ability. Ames and Ilg (1965), in studying factors which can handicap students in beginning school, found verbal difficulty to be a significant inhibitor of success in school. Tsushima and Hogan (1975), comparing studies of bilingual with monolingual students, found that the bilingual group of students encountered language and school problems in the early stages of elementary schooling. In their research of students in grades three, four and five, they found that the bilingual students did achieve lower verbal test scores than monolingual students, suggesting the gap in language abilities does not tend to evaporate between the primary and intermediate grades when the students are believed to be 'picking up' the language skills they need.

The Canadian work by Galloway and Mickelson

(1969) in British Columbia, was based on the "Cumulative Deficit Hypothesis." This theory has as one of its bases the idea that without the necessary language skills, success in school becomes progressively more difficult with age. Their study suggested that language deficiencies tend to remain with the student although this can be corrected.

Blossom (1967) elaborates on the problems of bilingual students in school by illustrating how, as the student progresses gradewise, the content of reading materials becomes more difficult. Reading development then requires almost a third language-involved, complex sentences that begin to appear at about the grade three level. No longer are reading materials so heavily loaded with pictures and the vocabulary difference between primary and intermediate elementary reading materials are considerable.

The Study

The Carrow Elicited Language Inventory (CELI)

was administered to 30 kindergarten students from English speaking homes and 30 kindergarten students from native Canadian homes where a language other than English was spoken (principally, the homes were Cree although some were Saulteaux/Odjibwe or Chipewyan). The CELI was designed to quantify and identify specific data on a child's grammatical structure. It is based on the technique of eliciting from the child an imitation of a sentence produced by the examiner - a total of 51 sentences in 12 grammatical categories are used. Each CELI is individually administered and the responses recorded for later transcription and analysis. As a diagnostic test, the CELI can be used to determine which specific linguistic structures may be contributing to the child's inadequate linguistic performance. A numerical score can be assigned allowing for the quantification of language status. The test's norming group of all white children were from middle socioeconomic level homes where standard American English was the sole language spoken. Since the

test's publication, Dr. Carrow-Woolfolk, the test's author, has results of testing done with black children. The test's age norms were found to parallel the scores of the black children.

This particular method for gaining information about a child's language ability (sentence imitation) has proved to be as reliable, if not more so, than the former method of obtaining a significantly long sample of a child's spontaneous speech in which the child could fail to reflect full language capability. Lee (1974) supports this procedure as a useful, objective measure of syntax development in children high in both validity and reliability. Lee found a definite correlation, as did Carrow, between age and development of language using such producures. Lee goes on to praise this method for allowing the clinician to then select appropriate teaching goals in language based upon an individual child's performance.

Chomsky (1969), using sentence imitation for her study of the acquisition of syntax in children from five to ten, stated that a child who is acquiring

language must construct a set of rules which allow for both speaking and understanding language. When the child speaks, we get evidence of various aspects of internalized grammer. Following an early education training program, Project Follow Through, Conrad (1975) utilized a similar method of taping language responses and coding them into 11 language variables to measure progress of oral language skill development.

Results

The raw score age equivalent for the control group of 30 kindergarten students from English speaking homes was from five to six years, matching their own ages. Thus the English group selected can be said to have equivalent language development to the test's norming group. The raw score age equivalent for the group of 30 kindergarten students from native homes was from two and one-half to three years of age.

Figure 1

Average Raw Score Equivalents

	Stanine	Age Equivalency
English Group N = 30	5	5.0 to 5.11
Native Group N = 30	2	Less than 3.0

In terms of the types of errors made, there was no significant difference between the two groups in errors of addition, transposition or reversals of words. Both groups made most of their errors in the categories of omission and substitution of words, the native group making a significantly greater amount of errors in the two categories.

Figure 2

Types of Errors - Average Raw Scores

	Omission	Substitution	Addition	Transpositions	Reversal
English Group N=30	8	7	3	1	1
Native Group N=30	39 * *	24 *	4	1	1

Significance of Differences Between Groups

* Significant at the .05 level

** Significant at the .01 level

Differences between the two groups for grammatical errors occured primarily in the verb, pronoun, contraction and conjunction categories.

Figure 3

Ranking of Grammar Errors
(Mean number of errors)

	English Group N=30	Native Group N=30	Number Possible
Verb	9	23	113
Noun	<1	2	59
Article	4	6	41
Pronoun	3	10	41
Preposition	<1	2	14
Negation	<1	3	13
Adverb	<1	1	12
Contraction	0	3	12
Adjective	<1	<1	9
Noun Plural	<1	1	8
Conjunction	0	2	7
Demonstrative	<1	<1	2

The verb category, where the greatest number of errors occured for both the English and native groups, can be further analyzed to summarize the verb errors

into: a) verb type b) type of sentence construction the verb occurred in and c) type of error. This procedure was done for all students scoring below the 10th percentile on total score.

Figure 4

Verb Error Summary for Test Scores Below 10th percentile (% Errors)

	English Group N=3	Native Group N=17
Verb Type		
Auxiliary	39%	43%
Gerund	33%	0
Copula	29%	26%
Modal	21%	47%
Verb	18%	20%
Infinitive	4%	9%
Verb Context		
Interrogative	43%	44%
Declarative	22%	37%
Affirmative	16%	36%
Negative	8%	41%
Error Type		
Person	30%	38%
Tense	26%	40%

Differences between the two groups existed for types of verbs, gerund and modal. Differences

between groups for verb context existed in declarative, affirmative and negative contexts. The native group made approximately equal numbers of person and tense errors, as did the English group, although the native group had a larger total percentage of errors.

Implications

Based upon the results of the CELI, there are several implications for educators. It would appear that teachers receiving new students into the kindergarten from native homes could safely expect their language ability to be like that of the English speaking three year old. This would mean gearing instructions to that level so that the students will be able to understand verbal instructions. If the kindergarten students from native homes can be offered a language development program, the CELI results show where the program might start, perhaps beginning with pronoun and verb usage (where most errors occur). Progress can also be measured using the CELI for testing at intervals throughout the language program.

Projects using both language testing and programs for language instruction report success, particularly at the preschool and primary levels. Adkins (1968) used pre and post testing with a language strengthing curriculum for Head Start classes in Hawaii. She found the tests selected did not accurately reflect the progress teachers and parents felt with the program, indicating a lack of appropriate instruments, at that time, to measure communication skills. Milam and Stafford (1970) found, after a one year program to deliver English instruction to Navaho kindergarten students, positive effects on school performance and have gone on to determine the long-term effects of early concentrated English instruction in a school setting. Askins (1975), in an evaluation of an on-going bilingual intervention program for preschool children, found students made significant gains in language development in English and in school readiness.

Koenigsknecht and Lee (1974, 1975) developed a procedure for teaching grammatical structure to children

in a program they called Interactive Language Development. Their lessons follow a natural growth from simple to complex sentence structures in which an adult engages the students in conversation around the structure being learned. The authors also utilized a 50 utterance sample for pre and post testing of the students involved in the program.

Numerous programs that have been developed for increasing language competence in young children have been based upon using the parent as the adult trainer. These programs basically utilize the techniques of expansion of utterance and modeling the adult speech (Cazden, 1965). The rationale for utilizing these programs is based on the way children naturally learn to talk (Garnica, 1975), through interaction with adults and older children. Some researchers (such as Rees, 1975) assume the ability to imitate speech is both innate and follows the general principles of reinforcement theory. In one case, a city's public school system developed family learning centres for parents of children needing language

development (Quick, 1976). Four programs developed for increasing children's language competence follow, as well as an annotated bibliography briefly describing other programs available.

Each of the following language programs has similar features: (a) Assessment of the needs of the student for language skills attained. (b) A developmental basis for skills progression, featuring comprehension of the concept by the student before reproduction. (c) Alternative strategies for grammatical concept presentation in the event additional teaching is needed. (d) Periodic checks and progress assessment for both student and teacher.

DEVELOPMENTAL SYNTAX PROGRAM

Authors: Lila Coughran, Betty Z. Liles
Publisher: Learning Concepts Austin, Texas

The program was designed for children between four and seven years of age. This program was developed and evaluated for a maximum effectiveness, with pre and post testing completed, as well as follow-up for continued improvement. Users of the program were contacted one year after purchase to elicit their findings and recommendations for the program.

Included with the program are a manual, therapy record forms and picture/poster sets for use with the program.

The program is divided into thirteen lesson sets, which include use of:

1. articles
2. personal pronouns
3. possessive pronouns
4. adjectives
5. verbs/is/ and /are/
6. verbs /has/ and /have/
7. past tense of regular and irregular verbs
8. plurality.

Each program includes two or three activities for ear training, production of syntax and carry over into normal speech and generalization to different contexts. Each step requires a certain number of correct responses from a child in order to move to the next step. Lessons may be selected for use whether a child omits, substitutes or transposes syntactic structures. The lessons are arranged in a developmental sequence, reflecting the order of their appearance in normal language development. The major benefits of this program appear to be the completeness of the program, in that all materials required for its use are included.

Recommended use of program

Pretesting - to determine auditory receptive competency (using, for example, Carrow's Test for Auditory Comprehension of Language or the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test) and a language sample (or the Carrow's Elicited Language Inventory method) to analyze errors in a child's speech.

Program selection - appropriate lessons are selected to remediate the specific errors in a sequential order. Rewards and reinforcements are chosen appropriate to the age and interest of the student (e.g., treats, tokens or progress charting).
It is recommended that the specific syntactical unit being treated get reinforced and any other error ignored (unless it is one the student had mastered in a previous lesson).

Performance criteria - Each lesson has a criterion for success (for example, a certain number of correct responses). If fewer correct responses are given, the teacher goes back to a previous step and reinstructs.

Lesson techniques - Ear training phase
Discrimination
Student self-corrects

Lesson time - 7½ minutes for best results.

Materials - Instruction manual
Cards for presentation and charts
Record form to record student progress during lesson

Sample record form

Session	Date	Phase	Step	Criterion	Time	Reinforced
1	___	_____	___	_____	____	_____

Sample lesson

Content: Articles:- a, some, the

Materials: 15 noun cards (Set 2)
print card "a" (Set 1)

Criteria: 10/10 correct responses

Methods: Bombardment - Instruction: "I want you to listen for "a" (pronounce "uh".)

Say: a ball
a tree
a flower, etc.

Recognition in phrases - Instruction: "Raise your hand when you hear me say "a".

Say: a ball, tree, door, a flower,
a banana, boat, boy, a girl, etc.

Reward responses until 10/10 are made correctly.

Discrimination between phrases - Instruction:
(Use blocks) "Choose the block that says "a".

Say: a ball/some children
the foot/a foot
the chair/some chairs

Recognition in sentences - Instruction: "Raise your hand when you hear "a".
(No pictures used)

Say: I see a (noun).
I see some boys.
I see the boys.
I see a chair.

Discrimination between sentences

Instruction: "Choose the block that says "a".

Say: I see the boy/I see a boy
I see some boys/I see a boy

Recognition of error (Use stack of singular noun pictures - Set 2)

Instruction:
"Tell me whether I say this right or wrong."

Say: I see a boy (right or wrong?)

I see boy.

I see some boy.

Discrimination between child's error and correct usage -

Instruction: "Choose the block that says the sentence right."

Say: I see boy/I see a boy.

I see a tree/I see tree.

DISTAR LANGUAGE

Authors: Sigfried Englemann, Jean Osborn, Therese Engelmann
Publisher: Science Research Assoc. (SRA)

Components

Three parts (all three parts of the Distar Instructional System), Language I, II and III.

Use

Suggested use is with students ranging from those with learning difficulties or those with English as a second language, through to the average and above average students.

Research

Findings suggest Distar language method is a fast method for teaching skills. As compared to other programs, children "saved" one year in grades one through three over other programs tested.

Method

Concepts of language and thought are taught by using physical action, response to pictures, and verbal give and take. Carefully controlled sequenced programs for progression utilizes rewards and behavioral objectives in lesson presentation form.

Components

Home materials
Lesson presentation books and teacher guidebook
Placement test
Seatwork books

Sample Lesson

Task
Objective
How to teach (specific teaching techniques to be used)
Materials necessary to teach task

Lesson Areas

Actions	Reading Skills
Classification	Directional Skills
Work Skills	Information
Sentence Skills	Applications

INTERACTIVE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT TEACHING (I.L.D.T.)

Authors: Laura Lee, R. Koenigsknecht, Susan Mulhern
Publisher: Northwestern University Press

The book is divided into three sections - the I.L.D.T. procedure itself, 30 stories written for children at a beginning level of syntactic development plus 32 stories for children at a more advanced stage (with language goals listed for each lesson) and an evaluation of the research using this method.

Section 1

The I.L.D.T. program is based upon the developmental order of grammer. One part of the procedure involves a scoring technique (the Developmental Sentence Scoring or D.S.S. technique). This technique establishes a developmental order in eight grammatical categories: indefinite pronouns, personal pronouns, primary verbs, secondary verbs, negatives, conjunctions, interrogative reversals and wh__ questions. Weighted scores are assigned to each item based on their early or late acquisition in normal language development. Assessment is done on a child's spontaneous speech using this technique.

> "The information gained from the analysis of a child's spontaneous speech allows a prescriptive remedial approach based on the comparison of his grammatical usage with the normal acquisitional order." (Lee, p. 7)

Immediate teaching goals are determined from the D.S.S. done on the child (or other such measure of language use level) and progress is accurately measured as the program is used.

Using I.L.D.R., the child responds to questions or prompts which develop out of the narrative. The child does not merely repeat sentences. The lessons are presented in storytelling form. The teacher reads a few lines of the story, then asks the child a question to elicit a target response which contains one or more of the grammatical goals of the lesson. The teacher then helps the student produce a more mature response than originally given, using a variety of techniques. In this way grammatical structure is presented to students in verbal interaction with a teacher.

Techniques to Expand Child's Response

Expansion Request

Ask student to expand his incomplete response without another model from the teacher.

Repetition Request

Ask the student to repeat the response to the question.

Repetition of Error

Teacher repeats student's incorrect response, asking studen to pick out the error and reformulate t correctly.

Self-Correction Request

Ask if response is right.

Rephrased Question

Rephrase the question and ask again.

Section 2

Lessons designed for small groups of three to six students are listed in this section, in 50 minute time blocks (although the I.L.D.T. program can be modified to meet other sized groups or time limits).

It is recommended that a session begin with a three to five minute activity to get students settled and ready to listen. The story presentation uses approximately thirty minutes of a session, a different story theme being used for each lesson as the vehicle for presenting and teaching language structures. All the students in the group hear the same story, although the teacher treats each student individually for the questions. Some will progress at a faster rate than others and, therefore, more can be expected of them in terms of target sentences. The teacher adapts the general procedure to individual student needs, using appropriate questions and prompts for expanding each response.

Following a break or another activity, the students have a final ten to fifteen minute lesson involving a group activity in which material related to the story is presented in a new form. The activities used here relate to the theme, concepts, vocabulary and grammatical structures presented during the story period.

After the session, the students' responses are judged for their progress and for modifying treatment goals of subsequent lessons.

Lesson goals are set from the analysis of the student's language sample taken before the treatment began. Long range goals are set approximately one step above the language level of the student. Any one lesson selects target responses to be elicited from the student that would be developmentally appropriate.

The format for the lesson provides one column for the teacher's narrative, interspersed with questions, and another column for the anticipated target response of the child. By reading the target response column, the language goals of any lesson are apparent.

Some hints suggested by the authors: Select only story topics within the students' experience. Limit the narrative to keep the students' attention. Provide enough semantic content in the marrative to elicit the target response. Make sure new structures are understood before eliciting them for target responses. Use frequent review of introduced structures in succeeding sessions. Include questions which elicit creative thinking at the students' level. Always use visual materials, such as pictures, to accompany the story.

Example

Narrative:	Target Response:
The car is parked on the street.	
It's a red car.	
It's not a big car. See?	
It's a small car.	
Is the car big?	No, it's not.
	The car isn't big.

Should the student not offer the complete target response, I.L.D.T. offers several prompting methods to get the student to produce the desired response. Additionally, there is a chart suggested for use in evaluating how effective these prompts are for the teacher (a periodic recording of a session would allow the teacher to do this evaluation later).

Section 3

The authors' evaluation used twenty-three pre and post treatment tests of language development for twenty-five children. All children using the program were under the age of five years and nine months. The average delay in grammatical development for these children was

twenty-one months at the time of their enrollment in the I.L.D.T. program.

There were gains measured at the end of the eight month program period on every test measure. The mean gain per child was 10.8 months of language growth in 8.3 months of the program.

PORTAGE GUIDE TO EARLY EDUCATION

Authors: Susan Bluma, Marsha S. Shearer, Alma H. Frohman
Jean M. Hilliard

Publisher: Cooperative Educational Service Agency (Portage, Wisconsin)

The Portage guide kit includes manual, checklist for acquired behaviors, including language, and activity cards.

Checklist

The language section of the Portage guide checklist ranks language behaviors from infancy through grade one language skills. The teacher can note which skills the student already has acquired and which are next to be mastered. Approximate age levels are listed for each skill and are cross-referenced to the appropriate activity card.

Example

Age level	Card	Behavior	Entry Behavior	Date Achieved

Language Activities

Because of the close relationship between language and cognitive abilities, many behaviors which could have been included under the skills area of cognition in the Portage Guide are included in language activities. Therefore, the teacher using the program can coordinate teaching efforts in both the cognition and language sections.

The suggestions in the language section provide guidelines for establishing an environment conducive to language learning as well as direct teaching methods. The guide's activity card file contains a series of cards listing suggested methods for skill teaching. The cards are listed sequentially, in order of difficulty

and age level appropriate at each skill. Several teaching suggestions are then listed on each card, to serve as a basis for meeting the needs of each individual student. The teacher can read over the suggestions given and select those which appear most likely to be effective for teaching. (This decision could be based on knowledge of the students' present level of functioning and the types of aides that best facilitate their learning.)

Manual

The Portage Guide teacher manual explains how the teacher can set behavioral objectives for each skill being taught as well as task analysis to allow the teacher to break down skills into small teachable steps.

The teacher is shown how to set behavioral objectives by indicating what the student is to do and how well the student must do it.

Example

1. Who will do what
2. Under what conditions
3. To what degree of success

In teaching skills to students, it is often necessary to break down skills into small steps, depending on the rate students learn. Task analysis allows the teacher to set terminal goals in teaching as well as target objectives.

Example

Terminal goal: Match all red circles saying "red".

Target objective: Match all red circles saying "These are red."

Using terminal goals and target objectives, the progress students make becomes recognizable in terms of small steps rather than having a single goal which is not yet accomplished and has no structure to accomplish it with.

Sample Lesson

Approximate age level of task: 3.4

Title: Use regular past tense forms (____ed)

What to do:

1. Describe an action using ___ed ending.
2. Have student do this and ask what was done. If "___ed" not used, say it and have child repeat.
3. After activity, have student talk about it using __ed tense. Praise.
4. Use puppets. Have student describe afterwards using ___ed.

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